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SPEECH

OF

MR. HENRY J. RAYMOND,

OF NEW-YORK,

IN THE ASSEMBLY, IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
ON THE RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO SLAVERY IN
THE TERRITORIES.

[This edition of Mr. RAYMOND's remarks is published by the Whig Members of the Assembly, from a belief that it may be of service, in correcting misapprehensions and misrepresentations that are prevalent, concerning the position of the friends of the National and State Administrations upon the general subject of Slavery. The report has been submitted to Mr. RAYMOND's revision.]

SATURDAY, January 26.

MR. RAYMOND addressed the committee substantially as follows:—

It will doubtless be remembered, Mr. Chairman, by this committee, that at an early stage of this session, at the earliest moment indeed, when it could be done, I took occasion to submit a series of resolutions expressing my own sentiments as to the action proper to be taken on the general subject now before us—and that on that occasion, moreover, I expressed my anxious desire that we should immediately act on the resolutions:—and from that time to this I have constantly reiterated my willingness, and so far as I know, that of the party with which I have the honor to act, to take action summarily on those resolutions and on this general subject.

It is hardly worth while to remark now on the reasons why the subject has been postponed until the present time. I think, however, I may safely claim, that I am not obnoxious—nor is the party with which I act,—to the charge of avoiding action or discussion on this subject, either in committee of the whole or in the house. I am gratified, sir, that we have at last reached it, and that there is a prospect of our taking action on it.

Many of the remarks made, however, indicate, as it seems to me, a misapprehension on the part of gentlemen who have taken part in the discussion, and on the part of others,—a misapprehension which I do not suppose is really entertained—but which has the appearance of prevailing—a misapprehension in form, if not in fact. The course of remark has apparently been based on the supposition that we were about to *legislate* on the subject,—that this legislature had been called on to make some affirmative law for the government of the new territories. That is not the case, as every gentleman of this committee is, of course, aware. All that these resolutions,—all that this house, or that this com-

mittee, propose to do, is simply to set forth the sentiments and opinions of the People of the State of New York, as we understand them, on a subject of great interest and importance to them and to the whole country.

The Federal Government is charged with the duty of legislating for our common country. The State of New York is an important portion of the federal government. She sends to its councils two Senators, or one-thirtieth part of that branch of the government, and thirty-four Representatives, or one-seventh part of the popular representation of this whole Union. She is entitled, therefore, to let her opinions and principles be known. She has a right to ask of the whole Union, that she may set forth the grounds and principles on which she expects her one-seventh portion of the legislative power of this country to be exercised. It is that which we now propose to do; and nothing beyond that has been as yet proposed in any quarter.

This proposition has been met, *in limine*, by the objection that it is not proper to instruct our representatives at Washington, as to our wishes on this subject. Now, sir, if we are to confine that word to its technical meaning, if we go so far as to say that these representatives shall follow the line of conduct which we may dictate and direct them to pursue, or else resign their seats, then I coincide in that objection. It has never been my belief that, to any such extreme, the doctrine of instructions was tenable. I take the word as used in the common law of politics. I take it simply to mean, that we set forth before our representatives, the principles which we, from whom they derive their power, desire to see maintained, and on which we expect them to conduct the legislation of the country.—Within this limit I cannot conceive any possible objection to the use of the word, or to the action which it implies. The principle is one which pre-

vails in every representative government,—in every government where the popular element finds any admission. It prevails in England to a far greater extent than gentlemen taking this view of the question seem to suppose. The British House of Commons represents the sovereign people of England, so far as the people are sovereign in England;—and whenever that house instructs the Prime Minister, he resigns at once, if he cannot comply with their instructions. We do not propose to carry this doctrine to any such extreme. We seek merely to inform our Representatives what our principles are, on a subject of transcendent interest to us and to the whole country; and furthermore, to give them to understand that we expect them to act accordingly, if they see fit to consult our wishes.

And now, what is the subject on which we propose to thus instruct our Senators and Representatives at Washington?

It happens, as all are aware, that a large territory has recently been added to this country. It is soon to be admitted into this Union in a more permanent form,—to share with us the political power of the Union,—to unite with us in regulating the relations and shaping the destinies of this Union; and the question to be settled by Congress is, *on what terms* shall this new territory be thus admitted to share our political power. And there is but one element, that creates any special division among the people of this country, on this subject,—and that is the element of Slavery. The South insists on the right to extend slavery into the new territories.—The North refuses to allow that extension to take place. That is the general issue now before the country, on which we propose to instruct our representatives.

Now, there are various grounds on which the South prefers this claim. She does so, first, on the ground of interest. The slaveholders of the South claim that it is for their interest to add new slave territory to the Union, inasmuch as it will open a new market for their slaves, create new fields for their labor and thus increase their value. They claim the right thus to increase the value of their slave property. They claim it on the higher and, to them and us, the more important ground, that they have a right thereby, to *fortify* slavery, as it now exists within their own limits, where all concede, they have over it sovereign power. They insist, that if these territories are made free, the Slave States will be hemmed in,—that slavery will be imprisoned,—that their slaves will be rendered comparatively worthless, and that in process of time, slavery must cease to exist, as a social and political institution within their limits. They claim the right to take whatever steps they may deem necessary in this direction, to fortify this institution,—to build it up, to lay its foundations deep and broad and to strengthen its buttresses and make the institution as firm and unyielding as the adamant of our Republic. They further claim the right, by making it slave territory, to increase their political power. They virtually claim that they, the Slave States, should have the ascendancy in this common Union, or at least, the most moderate of Southern politicians claim, that the South shall have an equality of power in this respect with the North. They claim that the number of the Slave States shall be at least equal to that of the Free States. These are some of the general grounds on which the South claims the right to extend slavery into free territory.

The North denies the justice of these claims, and

refuses to concede them: and she does this on various grounds. She does it, first, because she believes Slavery to be an evil—an evil socially, and an evil politically. The North holds Slavery to be in direct and palpable contradiction to the law of nature. The North believes that it is hostile to the best interests of our common country, that it is at war with all the rights of humanity, and in direct opposition to the fundamental principles, on which this great republic rests. It is natural, that, holding this opinion, the North should desire to see Slavery come to an end everywhere, not in any one section or country, but in all sections and in all countries, not in any one part of the globe alone, but on every spot of earth where man has been made the slave of his fellow-man. She desires this result to come about peacefully—quietly—under the influence of whatever causes may now be working in that direction. She does not desire that “bloody inventions” should be brought into use, to bring about that consummation, but simply that the issue should be left to the operation of those causes which may be working, in accordance with the laws of nature, its final extinction. Having this desire, the very reasons which the South urges, for extending Slavery, become for the North reasons of tenfold strength against it. If that extension will fortify Slavery—build it up—make it a permanent part of our republican institutions,—*on that account*, the North denies the justice of the claim, and refuses acquiescence in it.

And this is no new ground—no new desire on the part of the North. The North has always opposed Slavery. She was opposed to it in the formation of the government—though then, this like the rest was a Slave State. The North opposed it in the formation of the Constitution, but she did not succeed in her opposition then, because she deemed the Union essential, and without concession to Slavery the Union could not have been formed.—But the North did abolish Slavery within her own borders, as soon as it could be done. She did not “wait until it had ceased to be profitable.”

Now, some general considerations must, of necessity, mingle with this subject—considerations growing out of the nature of slavery as it exists here, and in other countries, and the means by which it may be extirpated. Slavery has existed in almost all nations of the earth at some stage of their existence. It is one of the results of that period of barbarism which has always distinguished the infancy of every nation. But, it has always yielded to the humanizing influences of civilization, of cultivation, and above all, of Christianity. These have brought it to an end, in nearly every country on the globe. Nations have got rid of it under these influences. As a general rule, (if a general rule can be laid down where the process has been so multifarious,) it has been extinguished by making the slaves *predial*—by attaching them to the soil—so that they could not be alienated without a transfer of the property itself. It is on this ground, and from this example, that the South apprehends that slavery may be brought to an end, if it is confined to its present limits. Whether slavery will thus be brought to an end in this country, may be doubtful. It is one of the worst signs of the times that in this nineteenth century of the christian era, one half of this great Republic should look upon human slavery as morally, socially and politically a blessing, and seek to fortify it and make it perpetual.

For my own part, I believe that its end must come. In this country, as in every other country

where it has ever had existence, its extinction must at some time, more or less remote, be brought about. The laws of nature, which are laws of justice and of goodness, will bring about this consummation, provided they are left to work out their due effect. The South feels this and struggles against it. She may resist it, but she cannot defeat it. The laws of man may delay, but they cannot overcome or destroy its power. It is part of that "mighty stream of tendency" which is resistless as time itself. The stars in their courses may as well be opposed. Its operation may be slow, but it is certain. It may not be heard but it will be felt. Its onward march is like that of the stars in heaven, which "neither haste nor wait."

And this ground of the South, that Slavery must be predominant—that it is a great and essential element in our political institutions, is new ground. It was never held by our early patriots and statesmen, by Washington, Jefferson, Madison, nor any of the wise and just men who made our country what it is. The first formal proclamation of this doctrine within my knowledge was made by Mr. CALHOUN, while Secretary of State, in his despatch to Mr. King then our minister in France, in which he set it forth as the policy of this federal Union, the government of this our common country, to fortify and perpetuate slavery as an essential part of our institutions. That declaration was the key to all the subsequent movements of the South, against which the North has taken a stand.—It was the key to the intrigues in regard to the annexation of Texas, which were in progress when it was made. It is the key to that war with Mexico, which has brought into our possession this territory, for which we are about to instruct our Representatives in Congress how we desire them to legislate. The effect of that declaration has been to re-awaken this sentiment against Slavery throughout the Northern States. And now, when the South seeks to extend Slavery into territory now free, for the purpose of postponing the date of its extinction, and making it permanent if possible,—the North feels bound, by her sense of justice and humanity, by her sense of duty to herself, and by every sentiment of respect for the public judgment of the civilized world, to resist the endeavor to the utmost of her power,—on the very ground upon which it is made by the South.

Another reason why the North opposes the extension of slavery into free territory, is, an unwillingness to extend still farther the unequal representation that slavery now gives to the Southern States. As all are aware, in enumerating the inhabitants of the Southern States—as a basis of representation in Congress, *three fifths* of all the slaves are counted, or in other words, five slaves count as three whites. They are not counted by themselves, and with reference to the representation of their interests,—but with reference to the interests of their masters; and thus, the power that their numbers give, is used against them by those to whom they give it.

How unequal this is, all are aware. New York, with her large population has thirty-four representatives, or one to every 70,000 inhabitants; South Carolina has seven, or one to every 23,000 of her white population; Pennsylvania has 24 representatives, or one to every 70,000; while Virginia has one to every 52,000 whites; Ohio has twenty-one representatives, or one to every 70,000; Mississippi has one to every 40,000 whites. And

the same contrast may be traced throughout. The ratio of representation, so far as the whites are concerned, is only half as great at the South, as at the North. This the North regards as unequal. The South is represented more largely than the North, twice as largely almost. Let it be understood that the North does not object to this, in reference to any State now in the Union; she has nothing to say against it so far as it is secured by the Constitution. But she does object to extending it indefinitely—she objects to extending it at all. She resists the claim of the South to ascendancy in the Union, as forming no part of the Constitution. It did not enter into either the letter or the spirit of the compact.

Here Mr. MONROE interposed, saying that he hoped his friend would pardon him, if he gave him an opportunity to correct himself on this point.—His colleague had stated that five slaves counted as many as three whites in the representation—and upon that ground argued that the representation of the South was thereby unequally increased. His friend did not mean that, he was sure—for the negroes of the North each counted as one in the basis of representation. In the South, five negroes only counted as three.

Mr. RAYMOND: I endeavored to make that point clear, but I see I did it imperfectly. The difference in the two cases is this. At the North, the interest of every free negro is identical with that of every other laboring man. Free negroes mingle with us, as part of our laboring community. When counted as part of the basis of representation, therefore, it is the interest of labor and of our laboring class that is represented. Now, how is it at the South?—Are the interests of slaves as laborers, represented at all? It was to this point, I tried to speak. The interest of the slave as a man—as a laborer, as part of a political community, is not represented:—as the property of his owner—and for the sake of his owner, he is represented,—and that is all. His owner takes the power which the census of the slave gives him, and uses it for his own protection *against* the slave. That is the vital distinction which touches the very root of the matter. And this feature makes it all the more odious to the North, that Slavery should be extended beyond its present boundaries.

Mr. MONROE was perfectly aware of the gentlemen's line of argument—but it was the matter of fact which he desired should be understood at the North, and which the gentleman had presented, unintentionally, no doubt, in a wrong light. As five Slaves counted but three in the basis of representation at the South, the proportion of representation at the South, was, by just so much, lessened—and that of the North increased—five negroes at the South were not represented as fully as five negroes at the North. Had the North any reason to complain of that? He repeated, he knew his friend did not intend to represent this matter in a wrong light—but he insisted, that the fact on which the gentleman was arguing, presented as it should be, would show that its operation was to weaken the South, not to strengthen it, in Congress.

Mr. RAYMOND: We do not misunderstand each other at all. The representation of the two classes is not the same thing, and when the gentleman undertakes to show that slaves are represented less fully than the free negroes of the North, he does not touch the real point at issue. As I said before, the free negroes of the North are represented as laborers, and so far the interests of labor are repre-

mented thereby. At the South, the slaves are not represented as laborers, but as the property of their masters. The master has this power of representation given to him by the slave;—but instead of being used by the master, on behalf of the slave and for his protection, it is used against him. I believe that states the whole question fairly and fully.

As I was saying, the North protests against this extension of Slavery, claimed for the purpose of giving the South the ascendancy in the affairs of the Union. The North is willing that the South should enjoy all the advantages of the Constitution to which both are parties, to the fullest extent. The North is willing that the South should retain over its slaves sovereign, entire and perfect control. But when the question comes to be one of ascendancy in the Union—when the South exacts a majority of sovereign States, and consequently a permanent, irreversible command of one branch of the federal government,—when she thus demands dominion over our common country and over all our common interests, the North feels bound to say, that it is not “in the bond,” that it forms no part of the letter or spirit of the agreement that was made for the protection of the rights which the South now has, or which she had when the compact was made.—Those rights we will preserve intact. I know of no intention or disposition in the North, or in this body, to trespass on those rights thus guaranteed.

I believe I have correctly stated the main issue between the North and the South, on this subject. As a general thing we may say, that the People of the North assent to the position I have laid down for them. I think I shall be quite correct when I say that the great body of the people of the North, agree that, for these reasons, Slavery should not be extended into free territory.

I may go further, and say that all political parties at the North, now profess to be governed by the same desire. “All political parties proclaim it as their desire that slavery should not be extended into free territory. They do this, because they know that the people demand it; and the fact that they do thus put forward this profession, on all occasions, is the best evidence in the world, that the people do demand it.

I now come to the practical question, which is the only question involved—the *means* by which such extension shall be prevented. How shall this end, which the whole North desires, be attained? What means should be adopted to carry it out? And the proper way to test the sincerity of these professions is to look at the actions of those who make them. Who are in favor of taking such action, as will most effectually, most certainly, carry out this common desire of the people of New-York? And it is to that test that I invite the attention of this committee.

This territory now belongs to the United States. It was acquired by the war with Mexico. One great motive with those through whose intrigues and diplomacy that war was brought about, is now well understood to have been the acquisition of this territory. It was declared in the United States, by the leader of one of the great political parties of this country—I mean Senator Cass—it was declared by him in 1847, that “there were important political considerations, which point to the extension of our territory, as one of the great measures of safety for our institutions.” He did not allege it as a particular rule for that emergency, but as a general rule—that extension was the true policy of the

United States. And the same doctrine was laid down, I think in the same year, in '47, by a distinguished Senator from this State, by the leading man of the same party—the man put forward by that party as its representative in the Senate of the United States—I mean Senator Dickinson. He submitted at that time a resolution which declared—

That true policy requires the government of the U. S., to strengthen its political and commercial relations *by the annexations of such contiguous territory as may conduce to that end and can be justly obtained.*

Thus, (continued Mr. RAYMOND) we have first the declaration of the leader of the democratic party of the Union, and next, that of the leader of the democratic party of New York, both pointing to the indefinite acquisition of territory as a great measure of national policy hereafter to be acted on and pursued. Now, when that policy was announced, it became a question of universal interest,—on what terms this indefinite extension was to be arranged. It was at that point that the famous ordinance, known as the Wilmot Proviso was introduced into the discussions of the day. The ground taken by the representatives of the North was, that if we must have this indefinite acquisition of territory, it must be understood that Slavery should not become one of its institutions.

[Mr. BURROUGHS who was sitting near, here reminded Mr. R. that the ordinance was introduced by a Democrat of Pennsylvania.]

Yes (continued Mr. RAYMOND) by a Democrat of Pennsylvania—and it was acquiesced in by all but the Democratic party with which he was connected. It was ground which had been taken long before, by the Whigs—established with them as a rule of action,—and which he adopted as his own—but to which he has not been able *even yet*, to bring his party even at the North fully to accede.

One result of this re-introduction of the Proviso then, was to check the spirit of conquest which then prevailed. Those who had set it in motion, found that if this was to be the issue, they wished no more of it. That was one good effect. The war with Mexico was brought to an end sooner, no doubt, in consequence of the introduction of that Proviso—for we had heard the ominous declaration in the same high quarter, to which allusion has already been made, that it could do us no harm to swallow the whole of Mexico. We did not go quite so far as that; Peace came, and with peace came the territory for which Congress is now called on to legislate. This territory having come to us, and requiring law for its government, the question is, *what law shall it have?* and what shall be the distinguishing principle of that law by which it shall be governed?—Here we come again to this general issue. The North insists that that law shall prohibit slavery within the limits of that territory. The North insists that whatever law the territory has, from what quarter soever it may come—from our own government or from Mexico—whatever law is to be dominant and supreme within those limits—slavery shall be prohibited, until it becomes a State or States, and changes and remodels its institutions according to the will of its inhabitants. So far as the action of the Federal Government is concerned, the North insists that slavery shall be prohibited by any law which the government may recognise as prevailing in the territory. That is the position, which I characterise as the position of the North.

What is the reply of the South? She declares in reply—(and some of her apologists at the North

unite in the plea)—the prohibition in question is unconstitutional. She insists that we have no right to make it. Some of those who espouse her cause at the North, take the same ground. All do not venture to do it. And those who do not, have announced that the climate of the country has made it unnecessary.

Now here is an issue between the South with her Northern apologists, and those who maintain the rights and feelings of the North on this subject. And the resolutions now before us, of the majority and minority of the select committee, in my view, represent substantially that very issue. Those of the majority are intended, or will have the effect, to carry out the wishes of the South. They are the resolutions which represent the principles and opinions of the South, and of her allies and apologists in the North. Those of the minority, which have already passed the Senate, are those which represent the feelings, the principles and the demands of the North.

I may stop here to notice a very serious charge brought against the report of the minority by the chairman of the committee. It was distinctly stated by the gentleman from Erie (Mr. Ford) when that report was first read, that it misrepresented the resolutions of the majority. I supposed, of course, that when the gentleman came to explain and defend his resolutions, he would take some notice of the declaration then made, and redeem the promise which that declaration implied. I was in hopes that when the matter came before us fairly for discussion, he would show wherein the minority report misrepresents the resolutions of the majority. I have not heard from him further on that subject, nor has he made the least allusion to it. I take it for granted that he abandons the charge, unless he shall indicate a willingness to establish it. I stand ready to vindicate the report of the minority on that point—and ask attention to the declaration made in these resolutions, and to what the minority report states in regard to them. The only declaration of opinion upon the main point in issue, is in the second resolution of the series reported by the majority, in the following words:—

Resolved, (If the Senate concur.) That the people of the State of New York are uncompromisingly opposed to the extension of slavery into any territory of the United States, where it does not now exist; and that our Senators in Congress are hereby instructed, and our representatives are requested to use their best efforts to prevent such extension by such constitutional legislation as may be necessary.

Now, (continued Mr. RAYMOND) the report of the minority declares that these resolutions "do not declare the constitutionality of a law prohibiting the extension of Slavery into Territory of the Union now free, nor do they recommend to Congress the passage of such a law." These are the representations of the minority report—and I have yet to learn how they can be thought in the least to misrepresent any thing in these resolutions.

The resolutions while they seem to touch the point in issue, evade it altogether. They declare opposition to the extension of slavery, but they do not call on Congress to prohibit it by any legislation, except such as they may deem constitutional and necessary. If the decision upon this point were not a 'foregone conclusion,' there might be meaning in the phrase. But it is well known that the Free Soil party proclaim that the resolutions mean nothing,—that there are two modes of escape from the instructions which they seem to convey. Those of our representatives who do not believe such

legislation constitutional, are of course not bound by them, and those who believe that it is unnecessary are free to act as they please. In either case their force is evaded. The resolutions are not simply unmeaning,—they are deceptive. They not only make no positive and explicit declaration and thus attain the end at which the people aim,—but by *seeming* to do this, they mislead and deceive the people themselves. They, are like the "juggling fiends" that met Macbeth on the blasted heath:—

"They palter with us in a double sense,
They keep the word of promise to the ear
But break it to the hope."

Sir, this is not the character of resolutions which the crisis demands. This is not the language in which New York should make her wishes known!

Now, how do the minority resolutions differ? They differ in this plain and palpable respect:—They call on our Senators and Representatives in Congress, to use their best efforts to prohibit by positive enactment, the extension of Slavery into free territory. They not only oppose the extension, but they demand a law to prohibit it. They require the Government to give to the people of the territory, a law which shall prohibit Slavery. That is the distinct issue between the North and the South. That is the issue which is to be tried in this committee. On that issue, gentlemen representing their several constituencies, will be required to take ground, because it is presented in these two sets of resolutions, and they cannot evade it.

How is this issue met, and how are we met when we press it upon the House? We are met, first, by a reference to the late Message of the President of the United States on the subject of this free territory. Gentlemen tell us that Gen. TAYLOR declares in that Message, that he desires us not to pass any such law—that he recommends a "masterly inactivity" upon this subject—that there is no necessity for positive legislation in regard to the matter, and that, therefore, he desires that we should not take any action upon it. I must express my gratification, that gentlemen hitherto standing on a different platform, should now avow their willingness to abide by the decision of Gen. TAYLOR on this subject. I congratulate the country on the near approach of that day, which I have long believed was not far distant, when this whole country, and all parties in the country, would come to rely on the patriotism, the firmness, the wisdom, of that gallant old soldier.—I am glad to observe, as among the most gratifying of these significant symptoms, that the Chairman of the Select Committee, (Mr. Ford) expresses his gratification at the tone of that message. I take it for granted that he would not have volunteered under the peculiar circumstances of this case, to endorse it and to stand by it, unless he had read it, and made himself acquainted with its contents and purport; and I beg to draw the attention of the committee to one or two clauses in that message,—which has thus been commended to our favor and attention by the other side.

I find in that message the following declaration from President TAYLOR:—

"As under the Constitution 'Congress has power to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territories of the United States,' every new acquisition of territories has led to discussions on the question whether the system of involuntary servitude, which prevails in many of the States, should or should not be prohibited in that territory."

The language used in this declaration, and the manner in which the two subjects of legislation and slavery are connected, show clearly that Gen. TAY-

LOR here recognises the main point of this whole discussion; he recognizes there the full power of Congress to legislate on this subject; he recognizes fully, clearly, unequivocally, the constitutionality of a law, should Congress pass it, prohibiting Slavery in these territories. I beg leave to ask the gentleman from Erie, the chairman of the select committee, whether he is ready to do to-day, what he did yesterday,—to endorse this position of Gen. Taylor on that subject.

Mr. FORD being thus called upon, said, that the gentleman from New York, misunderstood what he said yesterday. The gratification he expressed, was not at anything in the message. Mr. F. expressed no opinion about it, one way or the other, but he did express his gratification, that he had been in some measure instrumental in delaying the action of this House on this subject, until after that message had been received. He expressed no opinion on any thing in the message.

Mr. RAYMOND. Well, I am sorry that we have lost so valuable an accession to the Taylor party. I understood the gentleman to congratulate the country and the House on the position taken by Gen. Taylor in that message. If I misunderstood him, I regret it—but I must say, without intending the slightest disrespect, that I regret it more on his account, than on that of Gen. TAYLOR. It would be creditable to any man, to take his stand with Gen. TAYLOR on that subject, and I don't yet abandon the hope that the gentleman will, before a final decision on this question, take that stand,—for he is, as we all know, a gentleman who comes to conclusions with great caution and deliberation.

Well, sir, I wish simply to say that Gen. Taylor in that message, distinctly, unequivocally recognizes the constitutionality of the Wilmot Proviso. I wish the gentleman from Erie would do the same. I am afraid that neither he nor his party—the party of which he is, even under his own disclaimer, to a certain extent, the representative in this House—I am afraid that neither of them will take ground with Gen. Taylor in thus declaring the constitutionality of the Proviso. So far, then, we understand the position of Gen. Taylor.

What next? Gen. Taylor, we are told, deprecates action by Congress on this subject and therefore say the gentlemen, as the Whig party that elected Gen. Taylor must go with him upon this point, they and he are prepared to yield all that the South demands. The gentleman from Orleans (Mr. BURROUGHS,) in his able, eloquent, independent and in every way admirable address on this subject yesterday, took this ground. He assumed that Gen. Taylor was opposed to legislative action because he did not wish his administration to be embarrassed by any action or legislation on the subject of slavery in the territories. Now, that gentleman owed it to himself—to say nothing of fairness and common justice to Gen. Taylor, to state the grounds on which Gen. Taylor recommends that there should be no action upon the subject. He owed it to himself to read the message through, and to see why it is that Gen. Taylor thinks legislation upon this subject to be now unnecessary. His language upon that point is this:—

"In my opinion such a course would not be expedient, especially as the people of this Territory still enjoy the benefit and protection of their municipal laws originally derived from Mexico, and have a military force stationed there to protect them against the Indians."

This is the reason given by Gen. Taylor for the

opinion which he expresses, that legislation on the part of Congress is not now needed. And this reason is still more explicitly set forth in the instructions issued by the State Department, under the direction of the President, to the Honorable Thomas Butler King, when going as an agent of the government into the territory in question. I quote from those instructions, the following interesting and important passage:—

"The laws of California and New Mexico, as they existed at the conclusion of the Guadalupe Hidalgo treaty, regulating the relations of the inhabitants with each other, will necessarily remain in force in the Territories."

"Their relations with the former Government have been dissolved and new relations created between them and the Government of the United States, but the existing laws regulating the relations of the people with each other will continue until others lawfully enacted shall supersede them."

Those laws, (continued Mr. RAYMOND,) as you are all aware, prohibit slavery in those territories. This, then, is the platform of the Whig Administration with General Taylor at its head, upon this subject—that legislation is not now required, because the territories already have laws upon this subject. So far from saying, then, that legislation is not necessary because of the climate of the territories,—or the unconstitutionality of such legislation, or because it would embarrass the administration,—the administration steps forward and says that the laws of the territories already prohibit slavery therein, and that the administration will maintain those laws and insist upon their being enforced, until some other law to be passed by Congress shall supersede them. Now, what ground is there for the intimation that Gen. Taylor desired to evade or avoid this question? Why sir, he goes far in advance of all of us! Gen. Taylor says that Congress need not legislate on this subject, because the administration will see to it, that slavery is prohibited according to laws already in force within those territories. That is the ground we occupy—and if it had been taken months ago, by the Democratic party then in power, when it was attempted to be taken by the Whigs, there would have been no necessity for the agitation which has since so alarmed the timid and excited the whole country. Gentlemen may recollect the position of the democratic party in Congress on this subject. Mr. CALHOUN declared in his place in the Senate, that it was absurd to suppose that the laws of Mexico were in force in the territories,—that the constitution—

Mr. BURROUGHS I hope the gentleman does not intend to hold the democratic party responsible for all that Mr. CALHOUN has said.

Mr. RAYMOND. What I "intend" to do will probably become apparent when I proceed to do it. I have not done it yet.

Mr. BURROUGHS. I inferred from the gentleman's remark that he was about to do it—such was the impression which his remark would naturally convey.

Mr. RAYMOND. I cannot be responsible for the gentleman's inferences. It is my business to state facts and arguments: I cannot supply his lack of understanding or of logic. I said that Mr. Calhoun took the ground that it was absurd to suppose, that the laws of Mexico were now in force in the territories conquered from her by the United States. The same ground was taken by other Democratic Senators—North as well as South. They resisted this pretence, as they called it, that the laws of Mexico were still in force in the territories.

Mr. BURROUGHS: Will the gentleman state

what Democratic Senator from the North took that ground?

Mr. RAYMOND: I am willing that it should stand for the present as a general statement.

Mr. BURROUGHS: I prefer that such a statement should be more specific.

Mr. RAYMOND: I will make it more specific when the gentleman shall impugn it in regular course of debate. I cannot step aside from the line of remark, to satisfy all his scruples. I say that that ground was taken by a large section of the Democratic party. I have never seen that position denied or disputed by that party, or by any portion of it North or South. I understood the gentleman from Orleans himself, to take the ground in his remarks yesterday, that it was a "pretext" on which the Whig party were trying to get rid of the main question.

Mr. BURROUGHS: I have not spoken on the merits of this question at all. The only object I had yesterday was to bring up the gentleman from New York and his friends, to a proper discussion of this question.

Mr. RAYMOND. I congratulate the gentleman on having succeeded, and hope he may be gratified by the result. I state again that I understood the gentleman himself to sneer at this very point, as a "pretext" on the part of the whigs. If I misunderstood him, I will withdraw the statement. I understood him to say that the assumption that the Mexican laws were still in force in the territories, was a pretext on the part of the whigs to get rid of this question. I take it for granted, and he will not deny, that the gentleman to a certain extent speaks for the democratic party in this House and State. So far as he does so, that is the sentiment of his party. So far, therefore, I have answered the demand of the gentleman for "specific facts."—[Laughter.]

Now, sir, I have to call attention, for one moment, again, to the position of Gen. TAYLOR, on this subject. His position is this:—That it will be constitutional for Congress to enact a law, prohibiting Slavery in the territories;—and I understand him to say—and the Government to say—that Slavery is now prohibited there by law—and that he and his Administration are pledged to insist on the execution of that law, until it shall be superseded by the legislation of Congress.

And now I wish simply to ask gentlemen here, who took part in the last Presidential canvass—gentlemen of all shades of the Democratic party, to contrast this declaration, with the confident predictions they made as to the position and future action of Gen. Taylor on this subject. I recollect distinctly, that the whole land rung with the assertion that Gen. Taylor was a Southern planter—a Southern Slave-holder—a Southern pro-Slavery champion;—and that as such, he would veto the Proviso, if passed by Congress. And the idea was ridiculed that a Southern man like Gen. TAYLOR could rise so far above sectional prejudices, associations and interests, as to do otherwise.—Gentlemen here need not be reminded of the terms of opprobrium—of insult and of outrage with which this charge was reiterated from one end of the land to the other, by gentlemen who claim to be the sole friends of free territory, as well as by those who sought simply free soil votes, and cared nothing for free soil principles. We heard this charge in all shapes, and in all quarters of the North. But how has it turned out? We now see this Southern planter—this Louisiana slave-holder, who, it was

predicted, could not fail to be the instrument and agent of the South,—who was certain to veto the Proviso, and use all the power of his high office to extend slavery into the territories—we now find him publicly declaring his belief, that the Wilmot Proviso would be constitutional if applied to the territories,—that slavery is already prohibited there by law, and that he will see to it, that the law enacting such prohibition is duly enforced!

But, gentlemen ask us, why, if all this be so—if these laws are in force in the territories, and if Gen. Taylor is ready to maintain them, why we should be so anxious to instruct our Senators and Representatives on the subject. They argue that it is unnecessary, and therefore urge that we ought not to pass these resolutions. Now, we might concede all that, if they would give us up for the action of Congress on the subject. Bear in mind that the recommendation of Gen. Taylor is addressed to Congress;—the decision rests with Congress, not with us,—whether this Mexican law shall or shall not be superseded by the law of Congress itself.—Now, who has the majority in Congress? In the Senate the Democratic party,—in the House of Representatives the Democratic and Free Soil party together, have the majority. Now, will this party pledge themselves to maintain the existing laws of the territories—to stand by Gen. Taylor's position on that subject? Will they assure us here, if we leave it where it is, that it shall not be disturbed?—If they would do that, they would relieve us of all difficulty. But what are the signs of the times?—We see already a distinguished Senator of that party—perhaps the most distinguished and active, I will not say the most influential, Senator of that party—(I mean Senator FOOTE, of Mississippi,) we see that he has already introduced bills into the Senate, for giving laws to no less than four new territories, without any such prohibition of slavery. Senator HOUSTON, another leading democratic Senator, has introduced resolutions looking still more directly to the extension of slavery into the territories in question. On every side, we see movements of the democratic party, towards giving territorial governments to these territories—towards superseding the Mexican law, now in force, by our own laws. Now, is it safe to sit still and rely on their forbearance towards Gen. TAYLOR? They evidently are going straight ahead, to give a territorial government to that country; and what we demand is, that if they persist in doing that—if they will not allow the Mexican law to remain in force—we demand that they shall insert the provision by which we propose to exclude slavery, in any law they may pass to supersede it.

I cannot see the slightest shade of difference between the views of Gen. Taylor and those of the resolutions reported by the minority of the committee. They belong together. They are parts of the same system. It is, undoubtedly, true, that if we had waited before framing our resolutions, until after the Message had been received, we might have adapted their language (which was all I understood the gentleman from Orleans to object to) more precisely to that of Gen. Taylor. But the principles of both are the same. The substantial elements of both are the same; the end of both is the same; the means of attaining that end, *positive law prohibiting Slavery*, are the same in both. What more can any man ask?

It is said by gentlemen on the other side, that the climate of the territories is hostile to the existence

of slavery therein, and the gentleman from Erie (Mr. Fonn) urged that men living under the influences of a climate so mild, and of a nature so beneficent and alluring, could not possibly entertain the purpose or the thought of enslaving their fellow men. It really cannot be necessary to argue these minor points of objection. No man here, no matter of what party, who really desires to exclude slavery from these territories, can be willing to leave it to the influence of climate. Would to Heaven that we could rely upon Nature, by her soft and gentle influences, thus to cleanse the heart of man of its selfish and degrading passions, of its base and unholy purposes,—of its love of domination and despotic power. But we all know that the worst passions rage the highest where Nature speaks in her softest and most alluring strains. It is the "land of the East," it is

— "the land of the cedar and vine,
Where all, save the spirit of man, is divine."

Something more than climate is essential to that great work. Law may do something. Law may check some of the impulses of passion—may prevent some of its outward excesses. 'Tis for that we seek to employ law here. The deeper, the more essential, the only real change, must be left to influences from a higher source.

We are told that such a law would be unconstitutional,—or to speak more accurately, its constitutionality is left in doubt. Now I desire to see this point distinctly taken and decided here. I wish this House to declare, as Gen. TAYLOR has done, that it is constitutional for Congress to prohibit Slavery by such legislation. And I do not think that members here who maintain the principle of free soil, or their constituents who sent them here to sustain and enforce it, will be satisfied with any declaration short of that.

We are told, furthermore, that it would be highly improper to pass these resolutions, because it would be offensive and insulting to the South, and would be intermeddling with the affairs of other States. The resolutions of the minority are opposed on this ground. Now, there is nothing whatever, to give the faintest shadow of color to this assertion. The only point, on which the slightest foundation for such a pretence can be raised, is that the resolutions are against the extension of Slavery. So are those of the majority.—They are on the same footing, therefore, in that respect; and if one is insulting, so is the other.—But there is nothing of insult in either. They simply set forth our opinions and principles and call on those who represent us in Congress, to aid in carrying them out. This plea is urged on the part of the Southern States:—forbearance is asked on their behalf. It is urged that we should use no language of which they have a right to complain. I would not on any occasion or on any subject use any language, to which any State or any individual, could justly take exception; but I must say that this plea comes with a very bad grace on the part of the South,—on the part of States that have never hesitated to use language most offensive and insulting whenever they had an object to attain thereby,—and in which moreover they have never failed to find apologists at the North for insults offered, in the very men who now demand forbearance on their behalf.

We are told again that the South threatens the dissolution of this Union—and that therefore we should not act. Now, once establish this, as a principle and precedent,—once let the Empire State

with her one seventh part of the popular representation of the country, concede the principle, that whenever one section of the confederacy, chooses to threaten to dissolve the Union, if another section does not legislate to meet her wishes, and where are we? We shall have threats of disunion whenever the South wants money to dig out a Southern harbor,—(for she is not in favor of digging out any other.) We see that the South understands this very well already. She knows the weight which may attach to her threats;—and we have seen, within a few weeks past, that we cannot even choose a door-keeper for the Capitol, except under stress of Southern threats. Unless we consent to make a choice consistent with her wishes, the South declares she will dissolve the Union! [Laughter.] Once establish such a precedent, by acquiescing in it, and it will be used against us, and justly too, every day of every session. I would do nothing, sir, that may tend in the remotest degree to dissolve the Union, but I do not believe that the South will do any such thing, even if we prohibit the extension of Slavery into free territory. I do not mean to say that they who make these threats are not sincere in their intentions to carry them out. I only insist that they are not the intentions of the South or of the Southern people; and that they never will give their sanction to any scheme of dissolution for such a cause. Why, on what ground, do they threaten to dissolve the Union? To preserve and perpetuate slavery—that is the only object ever urged as a motive for dissolution. Now any man can see, upon a moment's reflection, that the remedy would be worse, infinitely worse, than the disease. They threaten to dissolve the Union, because the Union will not allow them to extend slavery into California and New Mexico. Suppose their threat to have been put in execution and the Union dissolved,—do they expect to extend slavery into those territories then? They complain that we do not now return their fugitive slaves, and threaten forthwith to dissolve the Union. Suppose it done,—do they expect us to return them then? They complain that we interfere with their affairs,—that we excite their slaves and render the institution odious; and for this they threaten dissolution. Do they expect thus to escape that interference? Let the Union be dissolved upon this ground, and every man at the North would inevitably be converted into an open, active, fanatical enemy of slavery as it exists in the Southern States. There would be no room for two parties, or for difference of sentiment, at the North upon this subject, after the golden chain should thus have been snapped asunder. Where you now find one abolition agent, stealing his way through the Southern States inducing slaves to make their escape, you would then find hundreds. The whole North would become aroused to the highest pitch of fanaticism upon the subject, and would deem it a holy duty to set on foot a holy crusade against Slavery in the South. And instead of seeing here and there a solitary instance of interference with the rights of the Southern States, we should find thousands ready and eager to engage in it as a systematic work. What sort of a remedy would this be for the grievance of which the Southern States now complain? They would have simply this alternative, acquiescence or open war.—They would unquestionably, in sheer despair choose the latter. And what would be the result of that? I have no desire to anticipate the bloody horrors of such a struggle. I have only to say of it, that

disastrous as it would be to the interests of the North,—terrible as would be the blow it would strike at the interests and glory of our common country,—tenfold, yes, a hundred fold greater would be its horrors for the Southern States.

These facts the Southern people know full well. They know, those of them who will allow the voice of reason to be heard for a single moment know, full well, that the only hold they have on the forbearance of the North, the only ground on which they can hope for their non-intervention in their domestic affairs, comes from the Constitution which binds us both. They know in their hearts, whatever may be their words, that the North has been true to that compact in all essential respects. I do not, for I cannot, deny that there have been infractions of it, though it has been in rare and isolated cases; but I do deny that they have been committed or encouraged by the great body of the people of the North, or of the Empire State. And in spite of this, the South knows, and when it comes to an issue, the South will feel, that the only anchor of safety for Slavery as it now exists in the Southern States, is the Constitution of our common Union. I do not believe the people of the South are yet mad enough to destroy that Constitution, to break that Union, to throw away the only shield which turns away from their domestic insinuation, the hostile blows of its deadly enemies. And therefore, I do not believe there is any real danger of a dissolution of the Union.

There is another reason which has great weight with me in coming to this conclusion. I do not believe the Union will be dissolved, because we have in the Executive Chair ZACHARY TAYLOR,—a man of the Union, and for the Union,—and a man who, with the will, has also the power to preserve the Union. I cannot but regard it as a most fortunate,—I may say a providential circumstance, that in this great crisis of her fate—for such it may and will be deemed in after times) our country has such a man, from such a section, and animated by such views, in the Presidential Chair. What let me ask, would have been the position of the country if that chair were now filled by a Northern man, elected by Northern votes and on Northern grounds? Would he have had the slightest control over the country upon this subject? Would he have had the slightest hold on the confidence of the South? Suppose that the candidate of the Free Soil party (Mr. VAN BUREN) had been elected,—and the case is at least supposable. Suppose that he had been elected,—pledged to the Buffalo platform,—a platform on which gentlemen whom I recognize as members here, then took their stand,—what would have been the condition of the country now? I have no doubt, sir, that had Mr. VAN BUREN, a Northern man, pledged at last to Northern principles, pledged to carry out the precise principles established at Buffalo, been elected to the Presidency exclusively by Northern votes, (as he must have been if elected at all,) and against the united vote of the Southern States,—there would have been reason to entertain fears for the preservation of this Union.

However this may be, I regard it as most fortunate that Gen. Taylor is now in the Presidential Chair, a Southern man, elected in part by Southern States, having a hold, in identity of interest and to some extent of feeling, upon the confidence of the South, and able to command the support of the South in whatever course he may deem best suited to preserve the Constitution and the Union of our common Country. In that fact I find strong reasons

for believing that there will be no dissolution of the Union in consequence of the action of Congress or of the government upon this subject.

Now, it must not be understood or inferred, from anything I have said, or from the line of remark which I have adopted, that there is on my part, to any even the least degree, a lack of devotion to the Union of these States and to the Constitution which created and maintains it. The gentleman from Orleans, (Mr. BURROUGHS) said yesterday that the resolutions of the minority are silent concerning the Union. He is mistaken. He spoke unadvisedly, I am sure. Those resolutions declare in explicit language,—

“That the people of this State are desirous of preserving inviolate the federal union, and that they will strenuously oppose all attempts, from whatever source they may emanate, or under whatever pretence they may be made, to effect its dissolution.”

That declaration is as strong as language can make it. For my own part, no man here or elsewhere shall or can go beyond me, in any expression of devotion to the Union of these States and to the Constitution of our common country. I love it for the blood that bought it—for the wisdom, the patriotism, the self-sacrificing devotion to the principles of justice and of freedom, which built it up, (wisdom and devotion which I fear we may not hope to see again,) and which made it, as I hope and trust it may be, perpetual. I love it for the blessings it has conferred on our common country—for the example it holds forth to the whole world. I love it for the good it guarantees to ourselves and our posterity, to the remotest generations. I love it for the high career of justice and of human rights on which it has launched this mighty and growing people. I love it because it holds forth to the world a form of government under which man may enjoy his rights, develop his powers, elevate and build up his character, and attain here on earth the full stature of that perfect manhood for which God created and designed him. I hope this Union may go on for ages in this same great career. I hope to see these States join hand in hand to make themselves, in the words of Milton, “the praise and the heroic song of all posterity.” Let us say to them, as that great prophet said to the twin nations, England and Scotland, when mischievous and audacious men sought by stormy bluster to raise the horrid standard of hatred and disunion between them—“Commit securely to true wisdom the vanquishing of craft and injustice;—join your invincible might to do worthy and godlike deeds;—and then he that seeks to break your union, a claving curse be his inheritance to all generations!”

And now, in regard to the issue before us, we ask only for fair, equal and just legislation for the whole country. We desire to use no insulting or offensive language,—we will not trench on the rights of any state or of any section. We only ask that the principles held and deemed essential by the People of the State of New-York, shall be clearly and correctly set forth, and allowed to have the weight which is their due in the councils of the federal government. We propose simply to say to those who represent us there,—we expect you to use the power the People of New-York have entrusted to your hands in defence of the principles which they hold dear. We expect you to embody those principles in any law which Congress may pass upon this subject, and to resist the passage of any law in which they are not embodied. We wish some positive law to be enacted, o

recognized as having force, which shall exclude Slavery from that territory of the United States which now is free. It is the duty of the administration to put that law into execution. That duty will be discharged. And if the South objects to it on the ground that it is unconstitutional, we appeal to the Supreme Court—the tribunal created by the Constitution, to be the common arbiter of all such disputed questions. The State of New York calls for the law, and trusts to that high tribunal for its constitutionality. That decision must be final. The North will so regard it. If the South refuses that appeal,—if she refuses to be bound by the judgment of that high Court to which the whole Union has solemnly covenanted to submit all such great controversies for final and decisive settlement,—if she refuses this, she repudiates the Constitution,—she violates the explicit letter of the compact. The Union by her act is dissolved already.

I have protracted these remarks, Mr. Chairman, much beyond my original intention. And lest I should weary the kind indulgence with which the committee has followed me thus far, I must pass over some points upon which I intended to say somewhat. I designed to speak of the position of the several political parties in this State on this subject. But I waive that. I do not know that it is necessary. The essential facts in the case are familiar to all. They are embodied in the report of the minority of the select committee, and by that report I am willing to stand. I undertake to make good all that it asserts whenever it shall be impugned. I think it clear that the people of this State are more nearly unanimous on the constitutionality of such a law, prohibiting Slavery from free territory, and in calling on Congress to embody such an enactment in any law giving government to that territory, which they may pass, than on any political topic whatever. I assert, and gentlemen know it to be true, that this very point has been made an issue in all our recent elections,—and there are gentlemen in this House who hold their seats solely in consequence of their adhesion to the principle herein set forth. It has been said here that the Whigs have been losing ground since they took position on that subject. There is a reason for that, aside from the assumed unpopularity of the free soil principles which they have maintained. They have been out-boasted on this subject by gentlemen who have got their seats thereby. I know districts in this State where the Whigs took a stand on this position; but Democratic candidates insisted that they were more zealously in favor of it, and that they would go further in its defence than the Whigs.—They insisted on that and nothing short of that,—namely the prohibition of slavery by positive enactment, and they insisted moreover that the Whigs would try to evade that issue. Thus, they got their seats by inducing the people to believe that they were not only free soil men,—but the only men who could be trusted upon that subject! The fact that the Whigs may have lost ground, therefore, when traced to its proper cause, proves the unanimity of the people on that point. Now, those who acquired their seats in that way, are to act here on this floor, upon this subject. I hope they will retain the same ground now which they took then. I confess, I am not confident in my expectations. Some of them may. We have seen one example of a gentleman of that party who is willing to place himself before the country on this basis—and that avowedly because he knows it to be the basis which

the people require. I do not know whether his example will be imitated or not. I go on the fact that the majority of the select committee, appointed by this house and supposed to represent the wishes, the feelings, the principles of the democratic party in this House,—sustained by that party in all things thus far, have reported resolutions which evade the whole subject,—which do not declare that such a law would be constitutional—or that such a law should be enacted. This fact leads me to fear, that gentleman who got their seats on that ground, may seek to keep them on some other ground. And upon this point I have only to remind gentlemen that, as the question is not now up for the first time, so it is not now up for the last time. Gentlemen will have to meet it again, when they come to render an account of their stewardship to those who sent them hither. And the action which they see fit now to take,—the vote they see fit now to give, upon the issue fairly and distinctly presented in the two sets of resolutions now before the committee, will afford a more decisive test of their real principles and sentiments, than any professions they may make, either here or elsewhere.

And now, I have only to say further, that, in all this matter, I have not been governed by any desire to agitate unnecessarily or mischievously, any subject whatever. I have not acted from any personal considerations or from any desire of popularity, though I must say, with the gentleman from Orleans (Mr. BURGESS) that any popularity which may follow the course of any gentleman upon this subject, must come from this direction. He who expects to gain popularity or public confidence by opposing this unanimous sentiment of the people of this State, will find himself sadly deceived: when he comes to grasp the favor he seeks. Nor have I acted under any local influence, or from any overweening zeal on the part of my constituents. I represent a district of the city of New York, and it has been said that the people of that city are not in favor of agitation upon this subject. The remark may, to that extent, be true. The city may not have shared to the full extent, the fervid and zealous sentiment of the country upon this question. Commercial as her interests mainly are, it would be strange if she had. But those whom I represent, and the party with which I act, in that city, are in favor of the principles which these resolutions set forth. They believe that Slavery should be prohibited from free territory by positive law. And I am not at all apprehensive that those who sent me here will complain of the course which I have seen fit to take.

But I have felt entirely at liberty,—I have felt bound by my duty, to consult the sentiments and the wishes of the people of the whole State, as well as those whom I represent. I have endeavored to act upon the principles held on this subject in the Western section, the garden of the State, the dwelling place of free men and of free thought—the home of my childhood, the land where above all others on this earth, my affections rest. There, you need not be told, but one feeling, but one wish, prevails. I have endeavored also to keep in view the wishes and the feelings of the northern section of this great State, where the same principles have been long since established, where they were proclaimed by a distinguished democrat now deceased, and where they have been upheld as firmly and as nobly as in any other part of this commonwealth. The people of that section will not, I am sure, change their ground upon this subject, while the memory of SILAS WRIGHT

shall be kept alive, a man of preeminent ability, from whom, in common with the party with which I act, I differed in many things, but who stood forth peerless among the statesmen of this country, or any other, for Republican simplicity of habits and of character,—a simplicity not surpassed by that of any name in Spartan or in Roman annals. So have I also had respect to the sentiments of the great Central section of this State, where the public heart has but one pulsation on this great theme.

I have sought to act upon what I believe to be

the principles and the wishes of the people of the whole State. I believe that they regard a law prohibiting slavery from territory now free, to be entirely in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, and that they desire the establishment of such a law as part of any government under which the people of those territories may be required to live. It is for their immediate representatives, here assembled, to say, whether those who represent them in Congress are to regard that as their wish, or not.

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